Atomic Spectroscopy

Article

The Mediating Role of Blue Ocean Strategy in the Relationship between Value Creation in Arab Agricultural Products and Sustainable Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT: The study aimed to identify the mediating role of Blue Ocean Strategy in the Relationship between Value Creation in Arab Agricultural Products (Dates, Olive & Cattle) and achieving Sustainable Competitive Advantage, and to achieve the goal of the study, the researchers adopted the descriptive and analytical approach, selecting an easy sample to represent of Producers, Exporters & Distributers in KSA, Jordan and Sudan. (125) Workers of an agricultural Products. Distributed to them a questionnaire developed by the researchers. Statistical package (SPSS) and (Smart PLS 4) to process the collected data.

The study found a set of results, the most important of which are: there is a positive relationship between value creation in date products and achieving sustainable competitive advantage for KSA with a Path coefficient of (0.054), and also show that Blue Ocean Strategy does not mediate the relationship between value creation in Dates, Olive & Cattle products and achieving sustainable competitive advantage for KSA, Jordan & Sudan.

Keywords: The Mediating Role; Blue Ocean Strategy (BOS); Value Creation (VC): Sustainable Competitive Advantage (SCA); Arab Agricultural Products

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural products in a number of Arab countries suffer from several problems in production and marketing due to the week capabilities of producers and marketers to access highly efficient input and output markets. This has led to high cost of production, poor quality and law selling prices.

This research deals with three agricultural products as examples, namely, dates products in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), olive products in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (Jordan), and livestock products in the Republic of Sudan (Sudan), and the application of a new strategy to create value for these products and market them in markets free of war, conflict, and collision between competitors and distance them from the current competitive markets.

This new strategy, called the Blue Ocean Strategy, relies on creativity and innovation in creating value for products and customers and increasing the demand for products in reel markets that are not disturbed by competing competitors.

STUDY PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS

The problem of the study is represented in the poor marketing performance of dates products in KSA, olives in Jordan, and livestock in Sudan, due to the absence of an effective marketing strategy.

Some studies have indicated the importance of creating agricultural value for these products to strengthen market competition. However, there is also an urgent need for an innovative strategy such as (BOS) so that these products can achieve and sustain a competitive advantage. Therefore, the main question of this research was: What is the role of blue ocean strategies in the relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage? The following sub-questions are derived from it:

1. Is there direct relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products, blue ocean strategy and sustainable competitive advantage?

2. Is there indirect (mediate) impact of blue ocean strategy in the direct relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study derives its importance from two aspects:

1. Scientific importance: The study contributes to bridging a research gap due to the lack of studies that deal with the subject of the study to the knowledge of the researchers - through exposure to the relationships between value creation in Arab agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage enhancing blue ocean strategy as mediate, an issue that previous studies did not fully address. Its dimensions were also exposed in this study. In addition, the study may contribute from a scientific point of view to providing a scientific reference on the relationships of value creation in Arab agricultural products, blue ocean strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, to contribute to supporting the Arabic library and help researchers to develop knowledge in this field.
2. Practical importance: The practical importance of the research stems from the fact that it provides data and information to decision-makers in countries concerned with the production and marketing of dates, olives, and livestock products, enabling them to rationalize their decisions, in addition, the study draws the attention of those concerned in the concerned countries towards the importance of blue ocean strategies, creating value in agricultural products and enabling them to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

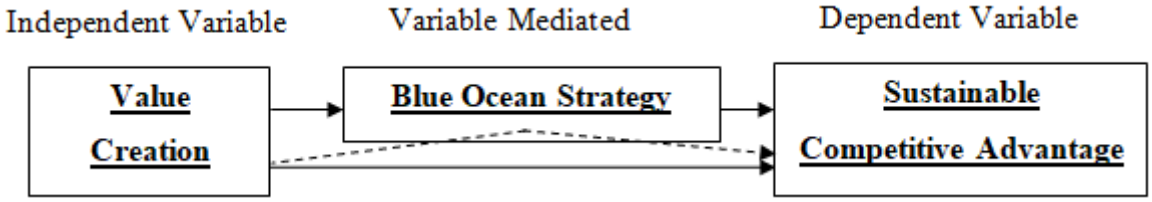
STUDY OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to identify the effect of the mediating role of blue ocean strategy on the relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage. To achieve this main objective, the researchers formulated several subsidiary objectives:

1. Determine the direct effect for value creation in Arab agricultural products on sustainable competitive advantage.
2. Examine the direct relationship between value creation and blue ocean strategy.
3. Analyze the direct impact for blue ocean strategy on sustainable competitive advantage.
4. Investigate the indirect relationship between value creation, sustainable competitive advantage through blue ocean strategy as a mediating variable.

Study Model

Figure (1): Schematic diagram of the model for three variables



Source: Prepared by Researchers Regarding Previous Studies, 2022, Riyadh, Amman & Khartoum.

Hypotheses of the study:

The study consisted of the following hypotheses:

1. There is a statistically significant relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage at level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).
2. There is a statistically significant relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products and blue ocean strategy at level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).
3. There is a statistically significant relationship between blue ocean strategy and sustainable competitive advantage at level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).
4. Blue ocean strategy mediate the relationship between value creation in Arab agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage at level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Previous Studies

ڊ, closely held companies (Binz-Astrachan et al., 2014; Wilson et al., 2014).

Measurement model evaluation

To assess our results, we follow the confirmatory composite analysis (CCA) process (Hair et al., 2020). The proposed theoretical model contains two higher-order constructs (HOCs). We applied the repeated indicators approach and initially assessed the reliability and validity of the reflective first-order indicators before evaluating the formative second-order constructs. This process involved the factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and the HTMT ratios to assess discriminant validity. The final step before examining the model's predictive validity is to ensure the nomological validity of the constructs. We show the results of the measurement model assessment metrics in Table (3) Our measurement models exceeded the minimum recommended guidelines for composite reliability and convergent validity (AVE).

Table (3) Construct reliability and validity

Dimension	Cronbach's alpha	CR (rho-a)	CR (rho-c)	(AVE)
Cost	0.870	0.871	0.906	0.660
Distinction	0.932	0.934	0.952	0.831
Exclusion	0.875	0.877	0.906	0.617
Flexibility	0.905	0.909	0.930	0.726
Image	0.900	0.907	0.923	0.669
Increase	0.958	0.961	0.964	0.752
Quality	0.915	0.921	0.934	0.702
Reducing	0.901	0.918	0.923	0.668
Customer	0.775	0.778	0.854	0.594
Investment	0.897	0.908	0.921	0.662

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Riyadh, Amman & Khartoum.

Table (3) reveals that Composite reliabilities in ranged from 0.778 to 0.961. The AVE values for the lower-order constructs that comprise in ranged from 0.594 to 0.831 (Fornell & Larcker (1981); Bagozzi & Yi (1988); Hu & Bentler (1999) & Hair et al.,(2019c)). To evaluate the statistical significance of the indicators, we executed the Smart PLS bootstrapping algorithm using 50,000 subsamples. All indicators were significant, with p-values above 0.000. Thus, we confirmed reliability, convergent validity, and significance for all constructs (Hair et al., 2019b).

To assess discriminant validity, measuring the distinctiveness of our constructs, we used the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015). All of the HTMT values – shown in Table 3 – were lower than the recommended guideline of 0.90, with the highest value at 0.92 for the lower-order constructs' Flexibility and Quality. Utilizing the bootstrapping algorithm with 50,000 subsamples revealed none of the values in the confidence intervals were equal to one. Having established discriminant validity, we next assessed nomological validity with other constructs in the nomological net (Hair et al, 2019b), (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988) & (Malhotra & Dash, 2011). All our results were consistent with the theoretical direction, expected size, and significance of the correlations, thereby confirming nomological validity (Cohen & Cohen, 1983).

Table (4) The heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT) for Discriminant validity

Dimension	Cost	Distinction	Exclusion	Flexibility	Image	Increase	Quality	Reducing	Customer
Cost	1								
Distinction	0.77	1							
Exclusion	0.71	0.717	1						
Flexibility	0.86	0.912	0.857	1					
Image	0.84	0.751	0.644	0.782	1				
Increase	0.58	0.762	0.586	0.739	0.595	1			
Quality	0.85	0.888	0.764	0.928	0.864	0.810	1		
Reducing	0.61	0.685	0.802	0.790	0.490	0.830	0.703	1	
Customer	0.67	0.543	0.532	0.630	0.887	0.491	0.724	0.362	1
investment	0.84	0.801	0.752	0.835	0.748	0.708	0.779	0.727	0.606

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Riyadh, Amman & Khartoum.

To assess the convergent validity of the formative higher-order constructs, we used collinearity (VIF) between the indicators the significance and relevance of the outer weights (Sarstedt et al., 2019). All VIF values were below the recommended maximum level of 5.0 all indicators of the formative were significant and meaningful in size (Hair, et al., 2010), (Valentine, et.al., 2014), (Al-Naser, 2018) & (Al-Shehri & Morsy, 2021).

Table (5) Collinearity statistics (VIF)

Dimension	Cost	Distinction	Flexibility	Quality
Exclusion	2.777	2.777	2.777	2.777
Image	3.168	3.168	3.168	3.168
Increase	3.209	3.209	3.209	3.209
Reducing	4.187	4.187	4.187	4.187
Customer	2.351	2.351	2.351	2.351
Investment	2.850	2.850	2.850	2.850

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Riyadh, Amman & Khartoum.

To assess the moderating effect of blue ocean strategy (BOS) as a mediator between creating value for agricultural products (CVAP) on sustainable competitive advantage (SCA), we first considered the structural model confirmatory composite analysis (CCA) process (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010) & (Hair et al., 2020). The full model shown into next figure.

Figure 1. A structural model with parameter estimates

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Riyadh, Amman & Khartoum.

To testing, structural model results (BOS as a mediator between CVAP on SCA) included, path coefficients were partially significant. The results summarized in Table (6) provide the path coefficients, their significance levels, and the results of the hypotheses tests.

Table (6) Hypotheses test results for both Direct & Mediator to KSA

Table (6) Hypotheses test results KSA

Path	Path coefficient	T statistics	P values	Result
BOS -> SCA	0.013	0.497	0.619	Rejected
CV -> BOS	-0.007	0.474	0.635	Rejected
CV -> SCA	0.054	2.253	0.024	Accepted
CV -> BOS -> SCA	0.000	0.214	0.830	Rejected

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Riyadh.

After checking the measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation, it was determined that the findings were statistically significant (95% confidence interval, 5,000 bootstrapping). So, As indicated by path coefficients and their significance levels:

HI accepted (There is a positive relationship between creating value in agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.024.
H2 Rejected (There is no positive relationship between creating value in agricultural products and blue ocean strategy) the Significance level 0.635.
H3 Rejected (There is no positive relationship between blue ocean strategy and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.619.
H4 Rejected (There is no mediator role of blue ocean strategy on creating value in agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.830. All of these hypotheses are specific to KSA related to dates.

Table (7) Hypotheses test results for both Direct & Mediator to Jordan

Table (7) Hypotheses test results Jordan

Path	Path coefficient	T statistics	P values	Result
BOS -> SCA	0.009	0.215	0.830	Rejected
CV -> BOS	-0.001	0.096	0.923	Rejected
CV -> SCA	0.025	0.805	0.421	Rejected
CV -> BOS -> SCA	0.000	0.018	0.985	Rejected

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Amman.

After checking the measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation, it was determined that the findings were statistically significant (95% confidence interval, 5,000 bootstrapping). So, As indicated by path coefficients and their significance levels:
HI Rejected (There is no positive relationship between creating value in agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.421.

H2 Rejected (There is no positive relationship between creating value in agricultural products and blue ocean strategy) the Significance level 0.923.
H3 Rejected (There is no positive relationship between blue ocean strategy and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.830.
H4 Rejected (There is no mediator role of blue ocean strategy on creating value in agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.985. All of these hypotheses are specific to Jordan related to Olive.

Table (8) Hypotheses test results for both Direct & Mediator to Sudan

Table (8) Hypotheses test results Sudan

Path	Path coefficient	T statistics	P values	Result
BOS -> SCA	0.020	0.629	0.529	Rejected
CV -> BOS	0.019	1.481	0.139	Rejected
CV -> SCA	0.007	0.228	0.820	Rejected
CV -> BOS -> SCA	0.000	0.428	0.668	Rejected

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Khartoum.

After checking the measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation, it was determined that the findings were statistically significant (95% confidence interval, 5,000 bootstrapping). So, As indicated by path coefficients and their significance levels:
HI Rejected (There is no positive relationship between creating value in agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.820.
H2 Rejected (There is no positive relationship between creating value in agricultural products and blue ocean strategy) the Significance level 0.139.
H3 Rejected (There is no positive relationship between blue ocean strategy and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.529.
H4 Rejected (There is no mediator role of blue ocean strategy on creating value in agricultural products and sustainable competitive advantage) the Significance level 0.668. All of these hypotheses are specific to Sudan related to Cattle.

Table (9) Hypotheses test results for Mediator to all country

Table (9) Hypotheses test results KSA, Jordan & Sudan

Path	Path coefficient	T statistics	P values	Result
CV -> BOS -> SCA	0.000	0.468	0.640	Rejected

Source: Prepared by Researchers from Field Study Data, 2022, Riyadh, Amman & Khartoum.
After checking the measurement model evaluation and structural model evaluation, it was determined that the findings were statistically significant (95% confidence interval, 5,000 bootstrapping). So, As indicated by path coefficients and their significance levels:

H4 Rejected (There is no mediator role of blue ocean strategy on creating value in Arab Agricultural Products and sustainable competitive advantage) the significance level 0.640. at all three countries.

CONCLUSIONS

This study raised a number of questions, and developed hypotheses related to the study variables. The study results answered the study question and came up the following conclusions:

1. The study showed that (62%) of the products are distributed by the producers themselves.
2. The study also revealed that (65%) of Arab Agricultural Products (dates, olives, and Cattle) are distributed in local markets and only (17%) are distributed in foreign markets.
3. There is a positive relationship between value creation in date products and achieving sustainable competitive advantage for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with a Path coefficient of (0.054) at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).
4. There is no positive relationship between value creation in Olive & Cattle products and achieving sustainable competitive advantage for Jordan & Sudan.
5. There is no positive relationship between value creation in Dates, Olive & Cattle products and blue ocean strategy for KSA, Jordan & Sudan. This result disagreed with Jaradat, et. al. (2017), which found positive impact of Blue Ocean Strategy on Creating Value.
6. There is no positive relationship between blue ocean strategy and achieving sustainable competitive advantage for KSA, Jordan & Sudan. This result disagreed with Mohamed (2020), which results indicated the significant and positive role of blue ocean strategy on promoting sustainable competitive advantage.
7. The Study found Blue Ocean Strategy does not mediate the relationship between value creation in Dates, Olive & Cattle products and achieving sustainable competitive advantage for KSA, Jordan & Sudan.
8. Recommendations
9. Based on the results of the study, the researchers suggests the following recommendations:

10. The necessity of strengthening the process of exporting Arab products regionally to pave the way for the launch towards access to global markets.
11. The necessity of spreading the culture of blue ocean strategy among Arab farmers, producers, and marketers in light of the intensity of competition and the difficulty of building a sustainable competitive advantage in competitors' markets.
12. Promote and develop new uses for Saudi dates as a natural product and complete food ingredients, such as the manufacture of nutritional supplements and others to expand their global marketing.
13. Olive producers in Jordan export the product globally and to benefit from the good mental image of their products in creating value for the customer and access to production in economic quantities to reduce production costs and achieve a global competitive advantage.
14. Cattle producers in Sudan stay away from exporting live sheep, as they are exposed to a lot of losses due to the difficulty of transporting them to other countries and exposing them to many problems
15. Attention to packaging and transportation operations, while adhering to international standards of quality and health rules & Paying more attention to enhancing the promotional mix, participating in external exhibitions, and establishing exhibitions and internal markets for products
16. The governments of the countries concerned (KSA, Jordan, and Sudan) should provide material and moral support to producers of dates, olives, and cattle, just like other countries that support agricultural production in their countries.

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